

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-3, 6-12 and 15-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Reilly (U.S. Patent No. 6,427,164) and Nielson (U.S. Patent No. 6,405,234). It is respectfully submitted, however, that the claims are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants' invention, as recited by claim 1, includes a feature which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, namely:

...until the email address set in the first provider server is invalid as said client's address, said address change notification deputation service server checks whether the at least one e-mail is sent through the first provider server, based on the path taken through the sender's e-mail server, to the sender of the e-mail to notify that the e-mail address of said client is changed to the second e-mail address, if the e-mail is sent through the first provider server.

This feature is found in the originally filed application at page 28, line 23 through page 29, line 24. No new matter has been added.

Reilly discloses an e-mail forwarding method. The method includes automatically resending to a new and valid e-mail address an e-mail that was originally sent to an "invalid" e-mail address. (See Reilly column 4, line 47). The new, valid e-mail address is registered with an address server. Therefore, in Reilly, the old e-mail address is "invalid." Accordingly, because the old e-mail address is "invalid," it is no longer maintained as valid in the server, as required by claim 1.

Further, in Reilly, the old e-mail address is always "invalid." That is, Reilly's server is designed to forward e-mails during the time period *after* the e-mail address has become invalid. Applicants' amended claim 1, on the other hand, requires that the server notify that the e-mail address is changed "until the e-mail address set in the first provider server is invalid as said client's address." Thus, Applicants' server sends notice during the time period *before* the e-mail address has become invalid. Accordingly, Reilly does not include all the features of Applicants'

claim 1 because Reilly is not capable of sending notice during the time period before the e-mail address has become invalid.

Nielson discloses a method of forwarding an e-mail message to an updated address. Using Nielson's method, after changing e-mail addresses, a recipient registers the new e-mail address in an address change server. A sender who wants to send an e-mail to the recipient can send an e-mail to the address change server requesting the new e-mail address and the address change server replies back to the sender with the requested address. Nielson also does not disclose notifying that the e-mail address is changed "until the e-mail address set in the first provider server is invalid as said client's address" nor does the Examiner argue that Nielson discloses a first provider server in which a first e-mail address of a client is maintained as valid in the server as set. Accordingly, Nielson does not disclose all features of Applicants' claim 1.

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, claim 1 is patentable over the art of record. Claims 10 and 19-25, while not identical to claim 1, include features similar to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 10 and 19-25 are also patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth above.

Claims 2-3, 6-9, 26 and 29 include all the features of claim 1 from which they depend. Claims 11-12, 15-18, 27 and 30 include all the features of claim 10 from which they depend. Claims 28 and 31 include all the features of claim 21 from which they depend. Thus, claims 2-3, 6-9, 11-12, 15-18, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 are also patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth above.

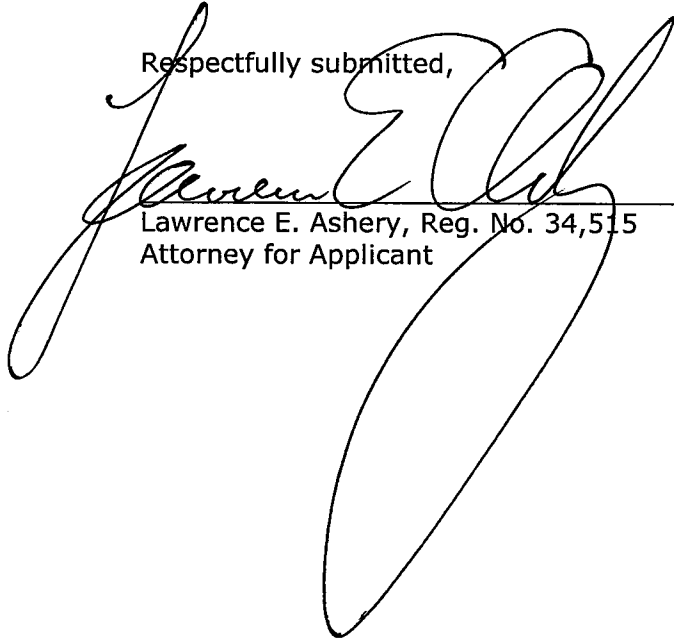
Claims 1, 10 and 19-25 have been amended to remove any alleged indefiniteness, thus obviating the rejection. Withdrawal of the § 112 rejection is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Application No.: 10/025,805
Amendment Dated: August 7, 2007
Reply to Office Action of: May 7, 2007

MTS-3299US

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lawrence E. Ashery', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is highly cursive and extends significantly above and below the line.

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Dated: August 7, 2007

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